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Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

TWENTY-TWO

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The BOYS™

TWENTY-TWO

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most dangerous force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys**.

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A-TRAIN?

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE KEYPAD, I CAN'T GET THE DOOR OPEN.

A-TRAIN?

NO, YOU CAN'T.

ALMOST THE INSTANT THE BRIDGE WENT DOWN, VICTORY COMICS STOPPED ALL THEIR BOOKS AT THE PRINTER'S. ART WAS CHANGED, OR SCRAPPED COMPLETELY. SCRIPTS GOT REWRITTEN. WHOLE STORYLINES DISAPPEARED OVERNIGHT.
GUY I KNOW HAD TO GO THROUGH EVERY PAGE THEY PUBLISHED FOR THE NEXT SIX MONTHS, REMOVIN' EVERY SINGLE INSTANCE OF THE WORD WAR--SO AS NOT TO OFFEND ANYONE'D FORGOTTEN WE WERE IN A REAL ONE...
HERE'S HOW THE SEVEN GREETED THE BRAVE NEW WORLD:
THE SEVEN
THE INFINITY DEBATE

I TELL YOU NO LIE, G.I.

conclusion

"PRINT AN' BE BLAND", YOU MIGHT SAY...

THEIR *SPECIALTY.*

POINT THEY'RE MAKIN' IS, WHATEVER ***ELSE*** YOU THINK ABOUT NINE-ELEVEN--SUPES IN GENERAL AN' THE SEVEN IN PARTICULAR *DIDN'T HAVE NOTHIN'* TO DO WITH IT.

WERE YOU STILL AT VOUGHT THEN?

LONG GONE. BUT I GOT PEOPLE STILL GIVE ME THE *INSIDE SCOOP.*

I'M ***THE LEGEND,*** KID, I ***BUILT*** VICTORY COMICS FROM THE *GROUND UP...*

AYE.

SO HOW D'YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED ON THAT 'PLANE?

I MEAN YOU SAID IT CAME STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

DID I?

YEAH, I GUESS I *DID.*

FOR A LONG TIME THE SEVEN STAY OUTTA THE PUBLIC EYE. 'FAR AS ANYONE KNOWS, THEY WERE OUTTA TOWN FIGHTIN' ***MOLESTO*** ON THE BIG DAY.

WHEN THEY DO COME BACK, ***A-TRAIN'S*** BEEN BROUGHT IN TO REPLACE MISTER MARATHON, AN' THE ***LAMPLIGHTER*** ANNOUNCES HE'S GONNA BE TAKIN' A ***BREAK...***

"WELL, HE HAS IT ANNOUNCED *FOR HIM.* HE CAN'T REALLY SPEAK AT THE *PRESS CONFERENCE,* 'CAUSE HE'S TOO BUSY *FILLIN' HIS PANTS WITH SHIT...*

"MAINLY DUE TO THE FACT THAT HE'S *DEAD.* HE'S THE FIRST EVER SUPE TO UNDERGO VOUGHT'S NEW *RESURRECTION PROCESS,* AN' HE COMES OUTTA IT ABOUT AS SMART AS A *SACKA POTATOES."*

LIVE

THE SEVEN: TRIUMPHANT

WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?

FRENCHIE AN' THE FEMALE KICKED SEVEN KINDSA SHIT OUTTA HIM. THEN *MALLORY* BLEW A FORTY-FIVE ROUND THROUGH THE BASE OF HIS SKULL.

MALLORY... *LIEUTENANT-COLONEL G.D. MALLORY*...WAS YOU BEFORE YOU WERE *YOU,* KID.

HE WAS YOUR PREDECESSOR. HELL, HE WAS MORE THAN THAT, HE RECRUITED BUTCHER AN' M.M. AN' ALL OF 'EM.

HE'S THE MAN STARTED *THE BOYS.*

DID YOU-- HAVE YOU DONE SOMETHING TO THE DOOR?

SO FAST YOU DIDN'T SEE ME.

WHY?

A-TRAIN, WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU...?

NOTHING.

IT'S THE ONLY WAY SOMEONE LIKE ME COULD GET HIS HANDS ON SOMEONE LIKE YOU.

YOU STUCK-UP LITTLE *CUNT*--

AAAAOOWW!!

GET OFF ME! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! A-TRAIN!

YOU LITTLE FUCKING WHORE, I'LL GIVE YOU WHAT YOU WANT, I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU--

GET OFF!

BLACK NOIR

YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR MIND! YOU CAN'T DO THIS, YOU CAN'T!

I CAN DO ANYTHING I LIKE, I'M A FUCKING SUPERHERO!

A-TRAIN, I'M WARNING YOU--!

FUCK YOU! I'M IN THE SEVEN, THERE ARE NO CONSEQUENCES FOR ME--

A-TRAIN! GET YOUR FUCKING GODDAMNED HANDS OFF!

NOW!!

AAAAAAAAHH...!

BASTARD! GET OFF! BASTARD!

YOU BITCH! YOU'VE FUCKING BLINDED ME! I'M BLIND!

YOU TRIED TO RAPE ME, YOU PRICK--!

OH GOD, I CAN'T SEE, I'M BLIND...!

GOOD! I'M GLAD! YOU DESERVE IT!

YOU FUCKING BITCH, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME...?

YOU'RE LUCKY I DIDN'T--

OH.

HOMELANDER! YOU KNOW WHAT THIS LITTLE WHORE DID? SHE USED HER FUCKING *POWERS* ON ME, MAN!

BUT HE--

FUCK YOU! SHE'S BLINDED ME, I CAN'T SEE SHIT OUT OF MY LEFT EYE!

DUDE, YOU NEED TO SHUT THE FUCK UP--

LIKE HELL I DO! SHE'S FUCKING BURNED MY EYE OUT AND I WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO *DO* ABOUT IT...!

FUCK!

IT, UH...

IT HASN'T BEEN A VERY GOOD DAY.

SO...WHERE'S MALLORY NOW, THEN?

OUT WEST, LAST I HEARD. THINK ***M.M.*** KEEPS IN TOUCH WITH HIM.

JUST DON'T TELL ***BUTCHER*** I SAID SO, HIM AN' MALLORY AIN'T ON SPEAKIN' TERMS NO MORE...

WHY NO'?

AN' WHY DID THEY KILL THE LAMPLIGHTER ANYWAY, I MEAN DID THE BOYS HAVE A FUCKIN' ***GO*** AT THE SEVEN...?

THE SEVEN ARE THE ***TARGET,*** KID. AIN'T YOU ***FIGURED THAT*** YET?

THE TARGET? WELL I KNOW THEY'RE THE BIGGEST SUPES, AN' WE'RE MEANT TO BE KEEPIN' THEM IN LINE... MANAGIN' THEM, LIKE...

HAW, HAW, HAW.

DO ME A FAVOR: NEXT TIME YOU'RE WITH BUTCHER, TAKE A LOOK AT HIM. REALLY ***LOOK*** AT HIM.

AN' ASK YOURSELF IF THAT'S A GUY ***REMOTELY FUCKIN' INTERESTED*** IN ***MANAGEMENT.***

ANYHOW, FIRST TIME OUT THEY TRIED GOIN' AT THE SEVEN BY WHAT YOU'D CALL A LESS ROUNDABOUT ROUTE. THAT COST BOTH SIDES PRETTY DEAR.

TAUGHT BUTCHER TO TAKE HIS TIME IN FUTURE. THAT PHONE CALL TO THE AGENCY ABOUT VIC'S SPEECH, THAT WAS A NICE LITTLE FUCK YOU OF JUST THE RIGHT PROPORTIONS...

HANG ON, COST BOTH SIDES?

WHO'D WE LOSE?

HUH. WELL.

ONE THING I'LL SAY ABOUT THE HOMELANDER: HE'S GOT A TEMPER, BUT HE'S SMART ENOUGH TO PICK HIS BATTLES. LAMPLIGHTER WAS A REAL DICK, SOON AS HE SAW THEY WERE BEIN' FUCKED WITH HE FLEW RIGHT OFF THE HANDLE...

AFTER ALL, WHO WOULD DARE?

"FAIR QUESTION, I GUESS. NO ONE EVER HAD.

"LONG STORY SHORT, HE WENT LOOKIN' FOR MALLORY AN' GOT HIS GRAND DAUGHTERS INSTEAD."

"THAT ALMOST SENT THE WHOLE THING NUCLEAR OVERNIGHT. HOW IN *FUCK* MALLORY STOPPED HIMSELF FROM...JESUS, IT'S BEYOND ME.

"WELL, NO ONE WAS KIDDIN' THEMSELVES WHO'D COME OUT ON TOP IN A *STRAIGHT FIGHT.* WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT, WITH BUTCHER'S *FILES* GOIN' STRAIGHT TO THE *MEDIA*--THAT WAS NO BIG MYSTERY *NEITHER.*

"SO A *GESTURE* GOT MADE."

"A *SACRIFICE.*"

AN' THAT'S HOW THEY LEFT IT.

THE SEVEN CAN'T MOVE ON THE BOYS 'CAUSE THEY'D BE DIGGIN' THEIR OWN GRAVES. *BOYS* CAN'T START NOTHIN' FOR THE SAME REASON, 'CEPT IN THEIR CASE IT'S *LITERAL.*

BUT WHEN BUTCHER MAKES A MESS O' VIC'S SPEECH...

A NUDGE. A *SHOVE.* GOTTA REMIND *VOUGHT* THAT SUPES IN NATIONAL DEFENSE ARE A *NO-NO.*

SEVEN *NEVER* STOPPED BEIN' THE TARGET HERE, KID.

AN' YOU THINK THAT'S WISE?

I THINK *FUCK VOUGHT-AMERICAN,* IS WHAT I THINK. FUCK THEIR PEOPLE, FUCK THEIR PLANS, FUCK THEIR SUPES.

AN' ANYONE WANTS TO TAKE 'EM DOWN, I'LL GIVE 'EM ALL THE HELP I *CAN.*

BUT...

I'VE HAD *TWO KIDS* IN MY LIFE. BOTH *SONS.*

BOTH *DEAD.*

STANLEY WAS A SERGEANT IN THE CAVALRY. FIRST OF THE SEVENTH, *AIR CAV.*

BUT HE DIED AT THE *IA DRANG* IN SIXTY-FIVE, BECAUSE OF THOSE STUPID, GODDAMN, FUCKIN' *USELESS RIFLES...!*

I WAS A *GOOD COMPANY MAN* 'TIL THEN. I PUT THEIR *SHITTY COMIC BOOKS* TOGETHER FOR 'EM, I MADE THEIR *SUPER-FAGGOTS* LOOK LIKE *HEROES.*

BUT WHEN MY BOY GOT *KILLED FOR PROFIT,* THE *TRUE BELIEVER* IN ME *DIED FOREVER.* IT WAS LIKE I FINALLY SAW THE LIGHT--AN' I *SWORE* I'D FUCK 'EM FOR IT, NO MATTER HOW LONG IT TOOK ME OR WHAT THE HELL IT COST...

THAT'S WHY YOU STAYED ON. ASKED TO HANDLE THE HOMELANDER.

GATHERIN' SHIT, KID. GATHERIN' *SHIT.*

'CAUSE I KNEW ONE DAY I'D MEET A MAN WHO'D *USE IT.*

JINGS.

WELL.

I WAS GONNA SAY YOU'VE GIVEN ME SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT, BUT THAT'D BE THE UNDERSTATEMENT OF THE MILLENNIUM.

D'YOU...MIND ME ASKIN' WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR OTHER SON...?

AH, HE WAS A FUCKIN' DOUCHEBAG. YOU KILLED HIM.

WH

WH

DIDN'T I *SAY* YOU'D BE DOIN' ME A *FAVOR*...?

YOU CAN SHOW YOURSELF OUT, KID.

BE SEEIN' YOU.

VINNIE'S COMICS BASEBAL CARDS. ACTION FIGURES
WOK
LIQUOR
140
KEN 9
HERE.
WAIT A MINUTE.
ACTION FI
POWE
THE FIGHT F
TOMORROW
BLUE TITAN
psych
ROCKE
THAT WASN'T THE BOYS' STORY, THAT WAS *VOUGHT-AMERICAN'S...!*
VINNIE'S
CLOSED
Hours Mon -Sat 9-6
CAPT. JERK!
The FORBIDDEN FIVE
THE WHOLE THING, FROM START TO--*AW, C'MON TO FUCK!*
HHHH.
I'M NO WISER THAN I EVER WAS.
WHAT A SWIZZ.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT ALMOST HAPPENED TO ME TODAY?

I HEARD.

NO GREAT SURPRISE; SOONER OR LATER WE ALL GET FUCKED AROUND HERE.

NO ONE'S GOING TO *DO* ANYTHING. THE LITTLE CREEP'S GOING TO GET OFF SCOTT-FREE, AND I DON'T *DARE* SAY ANYTHING TO THE HOMELANDER...

IT'S JUST SO--SO--!

I'M NOT YOUR FRIEND, LITTLE GIRL.

...GOD FORBID.

BUT WOULD IT KILL YOU TO OFFER ME A MARTINI?

*NOSE*PICK...

ANYTHING FOR YOU, O EMPRESS OF THE OTHERWORLD!

I *DON'T KNOW,* FRENCHIE! AM I YOUR FUCKIN' MOTHER NOW, OR SOMETHIN'?

ALLER DES GARDE-FORESTIERS!

HERE! TICKETS! NOW CAN WE *GO?*

ALLER DES GARDE-FORESTIERS!

HOW'D YOU GET ON TODAY, THEN?

AH, YOU KNOW. SAID WHAT I WANTED TO SAY.

HOW'S THE LEGEND?

SAME AS USUAL. I'VE NO' SPENT SO MUCH TIME WI' HIM BEFORE, I KEEP THINKIN' I'M GONNA START TALKIN' LIKE HIM...

LET'S HEAR YOU CALL ROY LICHTENSTEIN A THIEVIN' COCKSUCKER, THEN.

HMH.

SPLENDIDDIO...

YOU GET ALL THE GORY DETAILS YOU WANTED? SECRET HISTORY AN' ALL THAT?

OH AYE, HE WAS VERY FORTHCOMIN'.

FULL DISCLOSURE, LIKE.

GOOD!

COME AN' HAVE A DEKKO AT THIS, THIS IS THE FUN-FILLED EVENIN' I'VE GOT TO LOOK FORWARD TO...

...NO, BLACK NOIR IS NOT CAPED, BUT HE IS QUITE CLEARLY ***DARK:*** *AND HE HAS AT VARIOUS TIMES BOTH AVENGED* ***AND*** *CRUSADED. HE THEREFORE MORE THAN FULFILLS THE TERMS OF THE CONTRACT...*

04:19:06

WAIT A MINUTE, THERE'S MORE TO IT THAN THAT! I MEAN YOU COULD SAY I WAS QUITE **DEEP**, OKAY, YOU COULD SAY I'M A **DEEP** SORT OF PERSON--

NO YOU COULDN'T, JACK.

BUT YOU DON'T SEE ME TRYING TO STEAL **HIS** ROYALTIES OUT FROM UNDER HIS NOSE, DO YOU?

OH, IS THIS...?

SEVEN SURVEILLANCE FROM LAST YEAR, WE'RE TAKIN' TURNS TO WORK OUR WAY THROUGH IT. DON'T WANNA SWAP WITH ME FOR TONIGHT, DO YOU?

NO, I'M SEEIN' ANNIE.

DON'T SAY ANYTHING...

IT'S NOT THE SAME AND YOU KNOW IT--

ME LIPS ARE SEALED.

WELL, WHY DON'T WE ASK BLACK NOIR WHAT HE THINKS? OH, THAT'S RIGHT, HE NEVER FUCKING SAYS SHIT--HE JUST SITS THERE AND PICKS UP HIS **FULL ONE PERCENT**, DOESN'T HE...?

OH, GRAB A HOLDA THAT FILE ON YOUR WAY OUT, BY THE WAY. ONE ON THE DESK THERE.

MM? OH.

WHAT IS IT?

HOMEWORK, MATE.

HAVE FUN.

NO, I DO NOT WANT TO BREAK UP WITH YOU...!

I JUST THOUGHT-- AFTER--OH, GOD, I AM SO SORRY...

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THAT. THAT WAS NOTHIN'.

BUT IT WAS AWFUL, I MEAN I JUST WANTED TO DIE THERE AND THEN...

DON'T BE DAFT. D'YOU THINK THAT'S THE FIRST TIME SOMETHIN' LIKE THAT'S HAPPENED TO ANYONE?

YOU ARE SO GREAT.

YOU ARE EXACTLY WHAT I NEED RIGHT NOW.

AYE, I'M A GEM.

C'MON AN' WE'LL SIT DOWN, IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE KEPT US OUR USUAL BENCH.

I WAS SCARED YOU WEREN'T GONNA 'PHONE ME BACK, YOU KNOW. I'VE NO OTHER WAYA GETTIN' IN TOUCH WI' YOU.

I WAS SCARED I WAS NEVER GONNA SEE YOU AGAIN...

D'YOU THINK WE MIGHT BE MOVING TOO FAST?

I MEAN HERE I AM ASKING YOU IF YOU'RE GOING TO DUMP ME...BUT WE'VE BARELY BEEN OUT ON A SINGLE DATE, WE STILL HARDLY EVEN KNOW EACH OTHER...

I'M SCARED WE'RE--LETTING THIS ***SAFETY*** WE EACH THINK THE OTHER REPRESENTS, WE'RE LETTING IT TAKE OVER. LIKE WE'RE PROJECTING SOME IDEA OF WHO WE REALLY WANT TO BE WITH, BUT WE'RE NOT ACTUALLY STOPPING AND ***THINKING***...

JINGS.

YOU KNOW...I REALLY DO LOVE AMERICANS. I'M COMIN' TO LOVE THEM MORE AND MORE.

BUT YOU DON'T HALF BELIEVE IN ***COMPLICATIN' THINGS,*** DO YOU...?

WELL LET'S FACE IT, HUGHIE, WE'RE BOTH COMPLETE ROMANTICS. I MEAN YOU'RE NOT AS BAD AS I AM, BUT YOU'RE STILL PRETTY BAD.

NO ARGUMENTS THERE.

ANNIE, WHAT YOU'RE SAYIN' MAKES SENSE. IT REALLY DOES. BUT YOU ALSO TOLD ME YOU THOUGHT WHAT'S BETWEEN US WAS MORE PRECIOUS THAN ***GOLD,*** AN' I HONESTLY THINK THAT'S WHAT'S REALLY TRUE HERE.

AN' YOU KNOW--IF YOU REALLY DO THINK WE'RE MOVIN' TOO FAST--

I CAN ALWAYS KISS YOU REALLY, REALLY SLOWLY.

WARF!

WUHH?

OH, BLOODY HELL. SORRY, MATE.

HOW MUCHA THIS BOLLOCKS'VE I MISSED, THEN?

...GOOD LUCK BACK IN THE CORN BELT.

WHAT?

WITH WHATSIZNAME.

AND, AH, WHATEVER THEY'RE CALLED.

?

FUCK ME!

JESUS...!

WHO ARE YOU THEN, YOU DIRTY LITTLE MARE?

THE END